

**Andrew Jackson to Rachel Donelson Jackson, January 28, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson.
Edited by John Spencer Bassett.**

TO MRS. JACKSON.

Fort Strother, January 28, 1814.

My Love: on last evening I returned to this place, from an excursion against the Hostile Creeks who I had been advised was collected, in an new and fortified camp on the Tallapoossee river, near the mouth of a creek called emuckfa. their spies discovered my approach, and attacked me in my camp at 6 oclock a.m. on the morning of the 22nd Instant, expecting no doubt, to make my fate the fate of Genl Winchester on that day 12th months. I was prepared, and my troops tho raw met their bold and ferocious attack with firmness and undaunted resolution. The Brave Coffee, Carroll, and Sittler flew to the point of attack, encouraged the brave men, who was no less bravely encouraged by Colo. Higgins who commanded them. The Battle raged, untill it was sufficiently light, to discover and distinguish our enemies from our friends, when I was informed that that part of the line where the battle waxed hottest was verry much thinned being many wounded. I immediately ordered the only reserve I had Capt Ferrell commanding about forty raw infantry to repair to the spot. the[y] were led briskly by Colo. Carroll to the weak point, and Genl Coffee ordered and led on the charge, with Colos. Carroll and Higgins. the enemy gave way at all points. the friendly indians entered the persuit which was continued about two miles, in which was slain and counted twenty four Indians and enemies. as soon the pursuit was over, on examining I found we had five killed and several wounded It was impossible to move forward immediately, my wounded could not be left exposed. I ordered Genl Coffee, with four hundred white men, and about three hundred friendly Indians to follow to their Encampment and burn it if, it could be effected without too much hazard,

Library of Congress

but if fortified not to attempt it, untill the artillery could be brought up. he proceeded without delay explored the encampment, found it fortified, and immediately advised me thereof, and returned to guard the artillery up. this was a providential movement for he had not returned more than half an hour, when the enemy approached me on the right fired on some of Capt Gordons company who was out looking for an indian they on piquet the night before had shot. Genl Coffee came to me and asked for 200 men to go round and attack them, the order was given, but instead of 200, not more than fifty men went, chiefly composed of his old officers, Capt. E Hammonds old company Capt. Russle and a few of his Spies, Capt Elliott and a few of his company Capt Mann and a few of his of this I never was apprised untill after the Battle. as soon as the engagement commenced, I endeavoured to reinforce the genl with 150 indians, and whilst in the act I found it was intended as a faint to draw my attention to that point when they intended to attack my camp on the adverse flank. but before this could be done I was prepared to receive them. They officers and men recd them again with stubborn firmness, extracted their fire, immediately charged, and broke they enemy, which was persued a second time one mile and a half with slauter twenty three being killed by the whites. As soon as the pursuers returned and my lines closed I ordered Jame Fife a chief of the friendly creeks with one hundred and fifty of his warriors to aid Genl coffee. he obeyed, and as soon as he Joined the general a charge was made by the whites broke the Indians persuit made, they enemy entirely routed, the slain of the enemy by the whites estimated at from forty five to fifty on our side there was four killed and several wounded, amonghst the killed was our friend major Alexander Donaldson who bravely fought and bravely fell and General Coffee wounded slightly. as all this little Sparten band did, who went out and fought with the general in that affair—both officers and men faithfully did their duty. in these three affairs my wounded was so increased, my horses starving my men in some degree began to be panic struck. I could not advance and burn the Town, but determined to prepare my litters and commence my march for this place on the morning of the 23rd, I had twenty three men in litters. my march was slow but cautious. I expected another attack. I had a harycane¹ to pass, I wished to avoid an attack there, I passed it in safety and encamped

Library of Congress

for the night, having taken the necessary precaution to secure my camp against a night attack. The night was rainy, and from the si[gnals] I expected an attack in the morning. to prevent the enemy from obtaining

1 Meaning, a place devastated by a hurricane or cyclone.

any advantage over me whilst crossing a large creek called enotechopco² I ordered a new road to be cut, over it to avoid an ambushade, and to draw the enemy after me over a peace of ground, that I could slaughter the whole of them. all things cautiously prepared, every erangement made for the protection of front flanks and rear, I took up the line of march on the morning of the 24th. approached the creek the advance crossed, and the advance of the flank colums without interruption the sick in the centre had also passed and whilst, the last litter was advancing up the bank, the alarm gun, was fired. I felt rejoiced, the ground was of my own choosing, and I knew if the men would stand and fight I would destroy every nine out of ten of the enemy. I had confidence in the rear guard, who was commanded by Colo. Perkins and Stump, with whom I had left the brave Colo. Carroll, to superintend the order of the rear, my little Spartan band, the guards and artilerist at the time of the alarm was about to descend the bank of the creek with Capt. Ferrells militia company who I had placed in the rear to protect the sick and support the rear in case of an attack, the guards was commanded by Lt. Armstrong in the absence of Capt Deaderick who had been for some time confined to his bed with indisposition. on the alarm gun being fired Lt. armstrong with his wonted bravery ordered the guards to form, unharnish the artillery, before this could be effected the right and left column of the rear guard with part of the centre, broke like Bullocks with their Colos. at their head or centre, rushed precipitably forwarded, the left column, plunged down the bank of the creek, with their Colo. at their head, threw several of the guards into the creek, rushed forward for the centre, throwing every thing into confusion. I met this column on the bank of the creek, my salutations were harsh my orders preremtory to which advance to the aid and protection of the brave who had halted with the brave guards to aid in stoping the overwhelming hosts of Indians that they were bravely advancing to meet, but all in vain. I attempted to draw my sword, it had

Library of Congress

become hard to draw, and in the attempt I had like to have broke my left arm or I should have halted the fugitives. the right column fled around the right [sic] column, and got into the advance of the line of march, which was then the rear of the Battle. Colo. Carrol had halted about 25 of the centre column, and the Brave artilerists in obedience of their order advanced in a most galling fire in the face of the enemy to the top of the hill where the[y] poured upon the enemy a tremendous fire, whilst the brave Lt with five or six men were dragging the artillary to the top of the hill. it was then that my heart bled for those brave men. I had ordered assistance but in vain, they were obliged to conquer or die. the cannon fired, the musquets roared, and the riflemen amongst whom was Small with carroll at their head did there duty. the cannon roared again, this Spartan band charged and broke the enemy. by this time I had a few brave men across the creek, they with the indians, Joined in the persuit. Colo. William Cocke 65 years old had advanced to the front and Joined in the chase and killed an indian. Capt. Gordon who was in front at the head of the spies rushed, to the fight, and entered

2 Enotochapco.

into the persuit, which was continued for two and a half miles with considerable slaughter. Capt. Russle of the Spies who was in the rear says there were upwards of 500 indians in view. in the first of the action the[y] carried off all their dead and wounded. there were twenty five bodies found dead on the field, and I have no doubt but in all there has been actually killed on the field of Battle by the whites and friendly Indians, two hundred, and had it not been for the cowardly conduct of those two officers (for the men were brave if the officers had shew the example) I should have killed the most of these barbarians without half the loss I sustained. the[y] are now under an inquiry before a court martial. they ought to be shot. they were the cause of the death of several brave men. in this last affair we lost four killed and several wounded, some of whom is since dead. this last was a signal victory over them, they lost all their packs and was never saw or heard of more, during my return march. on the subject of my private and domestic concerns you and colo Hays, with Mr John Hutchings must regulate it. I have not time to spend many

Library of Congress

thoughts upon wor[ldly] pelf or geer. My station is arduous and my duty severe. I will perform it. as to the vile slanderous vipers, I despise them as the crawling worm that rolls through the slime untouched, unnoticed by any. you may assure yourself and my friends, that intoxication is not a crime in me nor have I been intoxicated since I left you and this thousands can prove, and the fiend is not in human shape that dare say to me that he has saw me intoxicated in camp or any where else since I left Nashville. I have only time to add that I do not wish you to permit Fields to abuse clum. I expect I shall take him and keep him. one hundred dollars is too little for him, but of this I shall say more hereafter when time will permit. I am anxious to see you and my little andrew, had I been aided with troops, and provisions I should have made every hostile village smook before this. raw troops with officers at their head seeking for popularity will not do, but I am in the field, I know I have the confidence of general Pinckney. I shall do my duty, and with the blessing of kind providence will conquer my enemies, both foreign and domestic [enem]yes. accept my blessing kiss my little andrew for me, I will send him Lyncoya. give my love to all friends and believe me to be your affectionate husband